

What you can do:

A checklist of simple ideas that work in schools

All the activities suggested are drawn from effective programs.



Leadership: Build a joint approach

- Ensure your school's nutrition policy gives prominence to vegetables
- Meet with the school board, teachers, OSHC educators and canteen employees to ensure messaging on vegetables is consistent
- Communicate with families through brochures, posters, newsletters and emails on the value of eating vegetables
- Identify a "champion" or "champions" to lead and coordinate vegetable activities

Teachers: Have vegetables everywhere

- Create clear goals for education sessions
- Conduct practical classes on making vegetables part of lunch and snacks
- Educate children on the benefits of growing and eating vegetables, such as the environmental and health impacts
- Introduce vegetable education into other modules, such as storytelling, active play, numeracy, science and society. Use vegetable characters or mascots to encourage children to engage in these activities.
- Ask children to recall normal snacks or meal habits and discuss ways to add vegetables
- Have the children create posters or placemats that encourage vegetable intake or tell vegetable stories
- Provide non-food rewards, such as stickers, rather than rewarding with unhealthy foods
- Have "vegetable breaks" that emphasise the intake of vegetables
- Supply cutting kits with safe knives, chopping boards and peelers to allow students to prepare their own vegetables
- Provide take-home activities such as vegetable-rich recipes for children to create with their families
- Provide tailored feedback to families about children's eating behaviours such as stickers that state: "I tried [insert vegetable] today"

All staff: Encourage students to step-up

- Ask students to sign a pledge to eat more vegetables
- Get students to take up vegetable challenges, such as trying a new vegetable every week or cooking breakfast with a vegetable included
- Ask students to create their own vegetable goals – these should be clear, measurable and specific, e.g. bring vegetables to school for a snack every day
- Assist students to track their progress towards their vegetable-related goals
- Help students to identify potential barriers to eating vegetables and brainstorm solutions
- Provide children with food diaries – perhaps as simple as a sticker chart – to log their daily vegetable intake
- Be a role model for eating vegetables

Canteen: Put vegetables on the menu

- Provide a variety of vegetables in the canteen every day, including different types, colours, smells and textures
- Encourage vegetables to be readily available as snack foods
- Place vegetables at the start of the canteen line
- Ask canteen staff to monitor vegetable serves on offer and purchased

